

Americans will have only the haziest idea why.

I can only say to the families of those five patriots who came back in a flag-draped coffin, may we never forget. May we never forget that the war in Afghanistan continues to go on and on and probably will for the next 30 years. Come on, Congress, let's get together. Let's stop spending money in Afghanistan. More important, let's stop sending our young men and women to give their limbs and their life.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, as I always do, I ask God to please bless our men and women in uniform. I ask God to please bless the families of our men and women in uniform. I ask God, in His loving arms, to hold the families who have given a child dying for freedom in Afghanistan and Iraq. I ask God to bless us in the House and Senate, bless the President, and, please, God, three times, God, please, God, please, God, please, continue to bless America.

PROVIDING RELIEF FOR AMERICANS AFFECTED BY SHUTDOWN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Illinois (Mrs. BUSTOS) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. BUSTOS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to once again speak out about the human consequences and the reckless and irresponsible government shutdown. Today it is day 9 into this needless swirl of frustration and madness.

Yesterday I spent time on the telephone talking with a woman whom I am here to represent. She lives in a small town called Roseville, Illinois. It is in the southern part of my congressional district. Her name is Sherri Leath.

Sherri is a decades-long employee of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and she serves as a food inspector. She spent the first 4 years of her employment in a slaughterhouse, a beef slaughterhouse. The last 6 years, she is in the inspection area of a poultry and a pork processing plant. This is not a glamorous job, she is the first to admit that, but she works very hard every day, and she takes great pride in the fact that she is making sure that our food is safe and wholesome.

She has four children and six grandchildren, and she says she keeps them in mind and she keeps all the children in mind throughout this country as she is inspecting in these plants and makes sure, again, that this meat goes out safe and wholesome.

So today she will drive. She has a very long commute. She will spend most of that time in a cooler that is at most 45 degrees. And I would call someone like Sherri Leath an unsung hero, because without people like Sherri, who, again, are not receiving their pay right now, our food supply would be in jeopardy.

So she is going into work every day, not taking home a paycheck, and she is

worried at a deep level about her family's future. She has a husband named Thomas, who is a school bus driver and brings home \$800 a month. This is not enough for Sherri and Thomas Leath to pay their bills.

So they have already discussed what this government shutdown means to their family. Step one for them, if the paycheck doesn't come, is they will tap into their reserves, into their savings. Step two, if it leads to that, they will have to go into further credit card debt. This is not what we should be doing to people like Sherri and Thomas Leath. This is not what we should be doing to the hardworking Federal employees who want nothing more than to do a good job, go to work, and receive fair pay. But this is the way it has been for 9 days now.

We heard Congressman STENY HOYER speak half an hour ago now, talking about that we have an answer to this right now. We have enough Republican votes and we have enough Democratic votes today, within the hour, as he explained it, to get the government up and running again. We could immediately—immediately, today—provide relief for people like Sherri and Thomas Leath by reopening the government right here and right now. We have a bipartisan path to do that.

I would say let's do it. Let's get at it today and put these good, hardworking people back to work and receiving fair pay.

THE INCONVENIENT INCONSISTENCY OF THE ADMINISTRATION—DEBT LIMIT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) for 5 minutes.

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker:

The fact that we are here today to debate raising America's debt limit is a sign of leadership failure. It is a sign that the United States Government cannot pay its debts. It is a sign that we now depend on ongoing financial assistance from foreign countries to finance our government's reckless fiscal policies.

That was a statement by Senator Barack Obama in 2006.

Driving up our national debt from \$5 trillion to \$9 trillion is irresponsible. It is unpatriotic.

Once again, Senator Barack Obama in 2008:

Increasing America's debt weakens us domestically and internationally. Leadership means that the buck stops here. Instead, Washington is shifting the burden of bad choices on to the backs of our children and our grandchildren. America has a debt problem and a failure of leadership. Americans deserve better. I, therefore intend to oppose the effort to increase America's debt limit.

Senator Barack Obama, 2006.

But that was then; this is now. The President, last week, said, without an increase in the borrowing limit, "the

whole world will have problems." In other words, we are all going to die. The sky is going to fall unless the United States raises the debt limit.

He seems to be a little bit inconsistent on positions regarding the debt limit. Of course, now the debt limit is up to \$17 trillion, double what he talked about several years ago of not raising.

So we find ourselves in a situation where the President's attitude seems to be: I will not negotiate, except with the Russians, the Syrians, the Iranians about what is going on overseas. But I will not negotiate, I will not talk to the House of Representatives about American issues.

It would seem to me, Mr. Speaker, that things that are happening in the United States are really just as important as what is happening in Russia, Syria, and Iran—but maybe not to the administration.

The administration would rather be in shutdown and lockdown for political reasons than to talk, to negotiate, to compromise, to even listen.

You know, Mr. Speaker, they say that Nero fiddled while Rome burned. It seems that the administration is in bunker mentality while the United States is in economic turmoil. And where are we? We are in a situation where there is no talking. And it seems to me, the administration says it is our fault. The President won't talk to us. The President has the habit, it seems, to blame others on bad things that happen and takes credit for things that are always good.

But, in any event, I reemphasize the President's own words about why we should not raise the debt limit: it is reckless; it is irresponsible; it is unpatriotic; it hurts us domestically and internationally; it is a failure of leadership, and Americans deserve better.

I agree with that.

So since the President seems to be somewhat inconsistent about his positions, why doesn't he just talk to us? Talk to us about the debt limit, the continuing resolution, about America's issues, America's policies, America's problems, and at least acknowledge that the House of Representatives exists.

So I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, when you get to talk to the President—because I don't get to talk to him—and suggest that he come out of the White House and meet with the people's House and quit fiddling around and start talking to us so we can solve this problem together.

And that's just the way it is.

ECONOMIC HARM OF THE GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) for 5 minutes.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, the majority party's latest idea is to create a supercommittee to figure out how to reverse their Republican shutdown of